

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9544

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INFO AMCONSUL ADANA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 4561

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TU, UN

SUBJECT: TURKISH POPPY DEVELOPMENTS

REF ANKARA 4535

1. ON JUNE 11 EMBASSY OFFICER CALLED ON HALIL DAG, MFA'S ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS, TO DISCUSS THE TURKISH GOVERNMENTS JUNE 10 ANNOUNCEMENT OF A POPPY PRICE (REFTTEL) AND OTHER RELATED DEVELOPMENTS. FOLLOWING WERE THE MAJOR POINTS COVERED IN THE DISCUSSIONS:

A. POPPY PRICE. DAG EXPLAINED THAT THE PRICE OF 21TL (\$1.50) PER KILO FOR UNICISED POPPY STRAW, WHICH WAS ANNOUNCED BY PRIMIN SULEYMAN DEMIREL ON JUNE 10, REPRESENTED A "TOP" PRICE AND WOULD BE PAID TO FARMERS ONLY FOR THOSE CAPSULES WHICH WERE IN "TOP" CONDITION, I.E., UNLANCED, DRY (MOISTURE CONTENT NO GREATER THAN 5-7 PERCENT) AND WITHOUT FOREIGN MATTER (E.G. STALKS). THE PRICE WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE BASED ON MORPHINE CONTENT. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, DAG
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SPECTULATED THAT FEW FARMERS WOULD ACTUALLY GET THE "TOP" PRICE,

SINCE THIS WAS THE FIRST YEAR OF THE STRAW PROCESS AND THEY WERE UNFAMILIAR WITH THE BEST HARVESTING METHODS. HE SAID THE DECREEE SETTING FORTH THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION WOULD BE PUBLISHED IN THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE "PROBABLY WITHIN A FEW DAYS." HOWEVER, HE CONTINUED, THE SOIL PRODUCTS OFFICE (TMO) EXPECTED TO SELL THE POPPY CROP AT A PRICE LOWER THAN 21TL ON THE WORLD MARKET AND, IN EFFECT, WOULD SUBSIDIZE THE FARMERS.

B. CONTROL PROGRAM. DAG COMMENTED THAT THE GOT'S INSPECTION TEAMS WERE ACTIVE IN THE POPPY GROWING PROVINCES (SUPPLEMENTED BY LOCAL JANDARMA TROOPS). HE NOTED THAT THE 75 JEEPS PROVIDED BY THE UN HAD BEEN DELIVERED TO THE REGION. BASED ON REPORTS OF A FIELD TRIP BY AN MFA OFFICIAL, DAG ALSO CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS THAT UNLICENSED OVERPLANTINGS HAVE BEEN BURNED.

C. PROPOSED CENTRAL AGENCY. THE MFA HAS COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED TO THE PRIMIN'S OFFICE A STUDY RECOMMENDING THE FORMATION OF ONE CENTRALIZED AGENCY (ATTACHED TO THE PRIMIN'S OFFICE) WITH OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR COORDINATION OF THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT'S NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM (ANKARA 2971). THE PROPOSAL IS AWAITING APPROVAL BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

D. ERBAKAN'S REMARKS. IN REFERENCE TO RECENT REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO DEPRIMIN NECMETTIN ERBAKAN SUGGESTING POPPY CULTIMVATION WOULD BE PERMITTED IN MALATYA PROVINCE (ANKARA 3638) DAG SAID HE DID NOT RPT NOT ANTICIPATE THAT PERMISSION WOULD BE GRANTED FOR CULTIVATION IN MALATYA. HE COMMENTED THAT ERBAKAN WAS SPEAKING ON HIS OWN, PROBABLY FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES.

E. ALKALOIDS FACTORY. DAG CONFIRMED THAT THE TMO HAS RECEIVED BIDS FROM SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ALKALOIDS FACTORY IN AFYON. HOWEVER, HE DID NOT RPT NOT HAVE ANY INFORMATION REGARDING THE NAMES OF THE FIRMS PARTI- CIPATING IN THE BIDDING, AND EXPECTED THAT THE TMO WOULD TAKE ONE OR TWO MONTHS TO EXAMINE THE BIDS. (NOTE: JUNE 9 EDITION OF THE ECONOMIC PRESS AGENCY -- EBA -- BULLETIN REPORTED THAT FIVE FIRMS HAD SUBMITTED COMPLETE BIDS. THESE WERE FROM HOLLAND, WEST GERMANY, POLAN, YUGOSLAVIA AND BELGIUM. THE AMERICAN FIRM ABBOTT LABOATORIES REPORTEDLY CONFIDENTIAL

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DID NOT RPT NOT PARTICIPATE.)

F. DAG REPORTED THAT THE TURKISH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAD RECENTLY RECEIVED A LETTER FROM CONGRESSMAN RANGEL INQUIRING ABOUT THE GOT'S POPPY CONTROL PROGRAM. HE SAID THE EMBASSY WOULD PROVIDE THE CONGRESSMAN A DETAILED BRIEFING ON THE SUBJECT.

2. FOLLOWING ARE DEMIREL'S JUNE 10 REMARKS AS REPORTED BY
THE TURKISH PRESS:

"THE SECOND SUBJECT (DISCUSSED BY THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS)
WAS THE PRICE OF OPIUM POPPY CAPSULES. THE OPIUM POPPY HAS
BEEN CULTIVATED IN SEVEN OF OUR PROVINCES. WE HAVE
INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS. THE POPPIES
PLANTED WILL NOT BE INCISED, BUT THE CAPSULES WILL BE
PURCHASED BY THE STATE. THE SEEDS WILL BE LEFT WITH THE
FARMERS. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ESTABLISHED THE TOP PRICE OF
THE CAPSULE AT 21TL. THIS IS THE TOP PRICE."
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